Association of Reptilian and Amphibian Veterinarians

Advancing reptilian & amphibian medicine, surgery, & conservation

ARAV Monthly Herp Blerp

Issue 5, June 2013

Now a Word from Your President …

I was very excited to join our International colleagues for the 1st International Conference on Avian, Herpetological and Exotic Mammal 2013 in Wiesbaden Germany from April 21st to 26th! Over 500 veterinarians from around the world joined together to teach, learn, and celebrate all things exotic. The conference kicked off with practical labs and master classes over the weekend and a great Ice Breaker on Sunday night. The European College of Zoological Medicine celebrated its college day on Monday.

Throughout the week, the conference participants were able to hear lectures on the latest research, advancements, and the most unique cases in avian, herpetological, and exotic mammal medicine. We also enjoyed the hospitality of our German colleagues and all the historic charm of Wiesbaden including wine tastings, plenty of German beer, the Kurhaus Wiesbaden Casino, and the Gala dinner on Thursday night.

I hope all of you that attended enjoyed the conference and travel as much as I did! I am still enjoying browsing through the conference proceedings. So much great information!

In more exciting is the news, all the associations that cooperated to create CARE, decided to repeat the conference in 2015 in Paris! The ARAV organizers for 2015 are already hard at work to produce another exciting conference. Get ready Paris….Here comes ARAV!!!

Pictured Above: The ARAV gang at the herpetological field trip to the Messel Pit, a UNESCO World Heritage Site due to the abundance of fossils found there.

- Dana Varble, DVM

President ARAV

To Breath or Not to Breath, it's Reptile Anesthesia

Assisting in reptile surgery and monitoring reptiles under anesthesia seems more like a challenge than it actually is. The truth is, monitoring reptiles is like monitoring small mammal anesthesia, with just a few distinct differences. As long as you understand those differences, reptile anesthesia will soon be something you can feel confident in adding to your skill set as a technician.

Before surgery, most reptiles will be pre-medicated. When the medication has taken effect the reptile will likely be intubated. Unlike dogs and cats, reptiles are intubated with uncuffed tubes to avoid tissue damage in the trachea. Due to the way reptiles are triggered to take in air, you will often need to assist in respirations, either manually or with the aid of a ventilator. Reptiles breathe due to low oxygen concentration rather than increased carbon dioxide. With 100% oxygen most reptiles will not be stimulated to breathe. Although you can use monitoring machines while reptiles are under anesthesia, such as ECG, the most important tools for you to utilize are your stethoscope for respiratory sounds and your own critical thinking.

Another point to remember is that reptiles are exothermic. So maintaining an even ambient temperature for your surgical patient will aid in the metabolism of the anesthesia, and help ensure the correct anesthetic depth, as well as assisting with a smooth recovery. Towards the end of surgery, inhaled gas anesthetic can be turned off sooner than with small mammals, as it takes a longer period of time for reptiles to fully expel all the gas. Soon after turning off the anesthesia, your patient can be switched over to room air, but manual breaths will still need to be delivered 2-3 times per minute. This will help trigger the animals own respirations to start up again, and result in a sooner extubation time.

To learn about reptile anesthesia, there are many CEs and labs available, and most doctors will be happy to know you are willing to expand your skill set and add a stronger knowledge base to the supporting staff of their practice. In time, these skills will become as second nature to you as dog or cat anesthesia, and can help make you an even more valuable member of your clinics team and all around a stronger technician.

- Sarah Moyer, CVT Arizona Exotic Animal Hospital

Tips, Tricks, and Toys

Have a tiny chelonian that is impossibe to make sit still for an x-ray? Use a bit of Vet Wrap or porous medical tape and tape them to the cap of a syringe case. This makes those horizontal beams so much easier to capture!

- Erica M.

Have a helpful tip? A fun trick? Or a review on a new machine? Submit them to us!

ARAV Trivia

A HUGE thank you to the **Academy of Veterinary Technicians in Clinical Practice** for their monthly contribution to our monthly newsletter!

Each month they will submit questions that will help technicians better prepare for taking the Exotic Companion Animal specialization. We are thrilled to have them involved!

Check out their website: **www.avtcp.org**

Question #1: What is the classic bone lesion called that results in swelling in reptile patients suffering from nutritional secondary hyperparathyroidism?

Question #2: What is the protozoal parasite that causes mid-body swelling in snakes showing signs of regurgitation and what is the swelling from?

Upcoming Events and Deadlines

Save the Date:

Conservation Medicine and Diseases of Amphibians and Reptiles Course will be held **June 23-29, 2013**

Annual Conference of the Association of Zoo Veterinary Technicians will be hosting their 33rd conference **September 5-9, 2013.**

20th Annual ARAV conference in conjunction with the **AEMV** (Association of Exotic Mammal Veterinarians) will be held **September 14-19, 2013** in **Indianapolis**, **Indiana**, USA.

Want to submit an article, tip or hospital listing to the newsletter?

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